

THE TWENTY-FIVE BEST RESTAURANTS IN RIVERSIDE



ANCHOS SOUTHWEST GRILL

BELLA TRATTORIA ITALIAN BISTRO

CACTUS CANTINA

CAFÉ SEVILLA

CASK 'N CLEAVER STEAKHOUSE

CIAO BELLA RISTORANTE

CITRUS CITY GRILLE

CREOLA'S FINE DINING

CREST CAFÉ

DUANE'S PRIME STEAKS & SEAFOOD

GRAPOW THAI RESTAURANT

LA CASCADE/DONA TIMO'S MEXICAN SEAFOOD

RESTAURANT

LAS CAMPAÑAS AT THE MISSION INN

MARIO'S PLACE

MISSION INN RESTAURANT

MONARK ASIAN BISTRO

OLIO STEAK & SEAFOOD RISTORANTE

OOKA JAPANESE SUSHI & HIBACHI RESTAURANT

PEKING CHINESE RESTAURANT

PHO EXPRESS

RAXX BARBECUE & BREWING CO.

RESTAURANT OMAKASE

THE ROYAL FALCONER

SIMPLE SIMON'S BAKERY & CAFE

TRILUSSA RISTORANTE



Riverside's Top 25 Restaurants



2008

The Twenty - Five
Best Restaurants in Riverside





Riverside has become a destination for restaurant goers in the Inland Empire. There is a buzz in the air as chefs at our finest restaurants receive awards and honors (The James Beard Foundation has honored Restaurant Omakase Chef Brein) and draw diners from throughout the region.

There is a growing collection of national restaurants opening and expanding in our community: we now host a Yard House, PF Chang's, Elephant Bar, Cheesecake Factory...you name it and we have it. However, Riverside also has a local restaurant scene that is worthy of celebration. A few years ago, I asked Inland Empire food and restaurant critic Allan Borgen to sample what Riverside uniquely has to offer. At times his objective opinion has surprised me and he has found some hidden treasures. This year is no exception. Allan has included some restaurants that are new to Riverside and some long-time restaurateurs who have taken their offerings to a new level.

Again this year, we partner with Ted Weggeland of the Entrepreneurial Hospitality Corporation to bring this guide to local residents and guests. My wife and I plan to use this guide as we dine out throughout the year and hope you will do the same.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ronald Loveridge". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Ron Loveridge
Mayor



Welcome to the 2008 *Top 25 Restaurants of Riverside Dining Guide*.

Many new restaurants have opened up in our area and some very popular chain restaurants like the Elephant Bar, Cheesecake Factory, the Yard House and PF Chang's are now part of our community, so deciding which restaurants are the best of the best was a difficult task. I went to as many restaurants as I could find with the help of phone books, newspaper restaurant reviews, and suggestions from friends and business associates. Let me tell you, there are some great restaurants out there to try.

This year's dining guide has five restaurants that are new to the guide and I congratulate them on their inclusion. I invite all those who use this guide to contact me and let me know your favorites for consideration next year. You can reach me at allan@ktie590.com, or you can call me at (909) 910-3463.

Happy Eating!

Allan Borgen
Food and Restaurant Critic

Anchos Southwest Grill

(951) 352-0240

10773 Hole Avenue

Type of Cuisine: Southwestern

Price Range: \$-\$\$

Child Friendly

Full Bar

Anchos Southwest Grill remains the only restaurant in Riverside serving Southwestern cuisine, and I am sure happy they are since they still are doing a fantastic job at making some exciting and delicious Southwestern dishes come to life. All of their meats, poultry and fish are grilled over mesquite wood resulting in terrific smokey flavored meats while their roasted chili salsa is among the best in the area as are the wonderful homemade flour tortillas. The décor is reminiscent of a festive Pueblo-style village while the regional sauces will knock your socks off.

The Pork Ribs with Chile Ancho BBQ sauce, the mesquite grilled Bacon wrapped Shrimp, the popular Carne Asada, and their sizzling hot Fajitas and Rib Combo are my favorite dishes. Come hungry and be prepared for one great meal.

Price Range

\$ = Up to \$10

\$\$ = \$11-\$20

\$\$\$ = \$21 and Up



Restaurants featured on the cover:

*Crest Café, RAXX Barbecue & Brewing Company,
and Trilussa.*

Bella Trattoria Italian Bistro

(888) 326-4448

3649 Mission Inn Avenue

Type of Cuisine: Italian

Price Range \$-\$\$

Older Child Friendly

Full Bar

Bella Trattoria Italian Bistro is the newest culinary offering by the Mission Inn Hotel & Spa and is located on the Main Street Pedestrian Mall at Sixth Street. This open sidewalk bistro features fresh and delicious Southern Italian cuisine, including some terrific brick oven pizzas. Some of my favorite dishes are the spicy Sicilian Calzone, Penne Pasta with pesto cream sauce, baked Lasagna, and their delicious Panini sandwiches. As with all of the restaurants at the Mission Inn, make sure to allow yourself enough time for a casual stroll around the lush and antique laden grounds and marvel at the beauty and rich history of the Inn.

Cactus Cantina

(951) 789-0211

151 E. Alessandro

Type of Cuisine: American/Continental

Price Range: Lunch: \$ • Dinner: \$-\$\$

Full Bar

Child Friendly

Cactus Cantina is a great family restaurant that is housed in an old Texas Loosey's restaurant and serves some very good sandwiches, steaks, seafood, chicken, pork and Mexican dishes at prices that are more than fair. The fact that they use fresh ingredients, and their food is both tasty and nicely portioned, is why Cactus Cantina makes this year's Guide.

Dishes I found to be outstanding and worth ordering again were the steamed Mussels Marinara in a marinara dill sauce, the Cajun Salmon, the New York Strip Steak, the Chicken Fajitas and the Shrimp Alfredo. For dessert, the cheesecake wrapped in a crispy fried tortilla with chocolate and raspberry sauce should not be missed.



Cask 'n Cleaver Steakhouse

(951) 682-4580

1333 University Avenue

Type of Cuisine: American/Steakhouse

Price Range: Lunch \$-\$\$ • Dinner \$\$-\$\$\$

Older Child Friendly

Full Bar

The Cask 'n Cleaver Steakhouse on University Avenue continues to provide some excellent entrees in a relaxing "California Casual" ambiance. Large posters of wine labels adorn the walls while their 21-seat bar/lounge area is very inviting. On Thursday nights from 9 pm to 2 am, the piano bar comes alive with music and patrons wanting to relax and unwind. The Salad Bar is still served with their steak or prime rib entrees and their large selection of award winning wines are a mainstay of this restaurant.

The menu features a nice selection of appetizers, sandwiches, fish and seafood entrees like Crab Crusted Halibut, Fresh Charbroiled Salmon, and, of course, their aged Midwestern corn-fed beef steaks including a Mesquite Pepper Steak, the popular 14 oz. Rib Eye Steak, the 22 oz. Porterhouse Steak, and their signature slowly roasted Prime Rib. The Steak & Australian Lobster Tail is also a terrific dish to impress your taste buds or just about anyone who wants to be pampered.

Ciao Bella Ristorante

(951) 781-4045

1630 Spruce Street

Type of Cuisine: Italian

Price Range: Lunch: \$-\$\$ • Dinner: \$\$-\$\$\$

Full Bar

Ciao Bella is a beautiful Mediterranean-designed Italian restaurant that is both elegant and casual. The menu features a variety of traditional Italian dishes with a few original ones thrown into the mix. Like most all fine dining restaurants, the servers are professional and friendly, and the food is outstanding.

Some of the menu's standouts include the unique Ciao Bella Lasagna Roll, Kobe Roast Beef Sandwich, Green Garlic Shrimp, Roasted Rosemary Chicken, Roasted Pistachio Crusted Rack of Lamb, and their signature slowly braised Veal Osso Bucco. For dessert, I highly suggest trying the Tiramisu with Amaretto mousse and espresso soaked lady fingers.



Citrus City Grille

(951) 274-9099

3555 Riverside Plaza

Type of Cuisine: American/Continental

Price Range: Lunch \$-\$\$ • Dinner \$\$-\$\$\$

Older Child Friendly

Full Bar

Live music nightly

Located in the lively Riverside Plaza, Citrus City Grille's bright, multi-citrus colored interior truly represents Riverside's rich agricultural past while the cuisine is a fusion of Italian and Californian. In addition to the large dining room, there is a spacious outdoor seating area which features a fire pit. The spacious lounge area offers live music most nights where patrons can have a beer, sip their favorite wine, or try one of 50 signature martinis. The menu offers some exciting items from which to choose, including the Shrimp Scampi Linguini, the Chilean Seabass with Lemon Grass Cream Sauce, the Citrus City Meatloaf with a Rosemary Wine Sauce, Oven-roasted Duck Breast with Sun-Dried Cherry-Brandy sauce and the popular Angus New York Steak with Green Peppercorn-Brandy sauce.

Creola's Fine Dining

(951) 653-8150

1015 E. Alessandro Boulevard

Type of Cuisine: American/Contemporary

Price Range: \$\$

Older Child Friendly

Beer & Wine

Offering a tempting selection of American/Contemporary dishes with a French flair, Creola's is a wonderful restaurant for those wanting a semi-refined atmosphere with a touch of country and some really great food. If you like lamb, you must try the Lamb Shank with Dill & Sour Cream, while the Oven Crisp Seabass Filet with Horseradish Relish & Mustard and the Fresh Catfish with Mustard Cream Sauce are also excellent choices. Other favorites include Old Fashioned Pot Roast of Beef, Chicken with a Sherry Cream Sauce and Swiss Cheese, Linguini with Clams and Garlic Sauce and Filet Mignon with Bacon and Mushrooms. The food is tasty, the portions are generous, and the prices are excellent. I hope you give this "hidden gem" a try. You won't be disappointed!



Crest Café

(951) 784-2233

5225 Canyon Crest Drive

Type of Cuisine: American/Italian

Price Range: Breakfast: \$ • Lunch & Dinner \$-\$\$

Child Friendly

Catering

Full Bar

The Crest Café in the Canyon Crest Towne Center is a casual yet elegant looking restaurant serving some serious breakfast, lunch and dinner items. The restaurant, which has been a mainstay of the Center since 1994, moved to a new building in 2007 featuring a beautiful dining room decked out with dark woods, a high ceiling and a very large bar that centers the dining room. The menu features both American and Italian favorites like Cinnamon Apple Belgian Waffles, Stuffed Cinnamon & Raisin French Toast, a delicious Chicken Avocado Burger, a zesty Blackened Rib Eye Steak, Chicken Piccata plus a fantastic Bread Pudding. The portions are larger than life and the food is fresh, tasty and affordably priced. Welcome to this year's Top 25 Restaurants of Riverside Guide!

Duane's Prime Steaks & Seafood

(951) 784-0300

3649 Mission Inn Avenue

Type of Cuisine: American/Prime Steak House

Price Range: \$\$-\$\$\$

Full Bar

Reservations are suggested

Featuring only USDA Prime Beef and the finest in seafood and fish entrees, Duane's in the Mission Inn Hotel & Spa, is the Inland Empire's only AAA Four Diamond Restaurant winning numerous prestigious awards for its food and wines. The elegant and stunning restaurant décor is the perfect setting to propose, impress or pamper yourself or a loved one.

Since Prime Beef is what Duane's specializes in, the juicy 25-oz. Rib Chop, the two extra thick Lamb Chops, the delicious Chateaubriand For Two and Chicken Forestiere are excellent choices while the Potato-Crusted Halibut with a Citrus-Dill Sauce and the Grilled Swordfish are some great choices for those wanting more than steaks. There are also great side dishes like the Creamed Spinach and the Grilled Portabella Mushrooms as well as three excellent sauces that can be ordered with your steak, the Brandy & Green Peppercorn and the Southwestern being my favorites.

The whole "Mission Inn Experience" makes Duane's my pick for the number one dining spot in Riverside for fine steaks, ambiance and relaxation.



Grapow Thai Restaurant

(951) 780-1132

497 Alessandro Boulevard

Type of Cuisine: Thai

Price Range \$-\$\$

Child Friendly

Beer and Wine

Grapow Thai Restaurant features delicious Thai dishes with beautifully prepared plates in an atmosphere that can best be described as casual Asian elegance. The modern Asian influenced sage green and copper colored walls, soft and bright paintings and pictures, and a large open kitchen are just a few of the many beautiful design features that help create a most relaxing dining experience. Dishes like the King's Fried Rice, the 8 Warriors, Thai Salmon, the BBQ Thai Chicken, and the impressive Gra Pow Hot Plate are just some of my favorites. Chef Patrick, formerly from Table for Two Thai restaurant, continues his mastery of Thai cooking and thank goodness he does!

La Cascada/Dona Timo's Mexican Seafood Restaurant

(951) 684-8614

3635 University Avenue

Type of Cuisine: Mexican

Price Range: Breakfast \$ • Lunch & Dinner \$-\$

Child Friendly • Beer & Wine

La Cascada has a long history of being one of the most popular Mexican seafood restaurants in Riverside. But now that the owners of Dona Timo's Mexican restaurant in Fontana have merged their great dishes from the Jalisco region of Mexico, La Cascada has become one of the most exciting Mexican restaurants in the Inland Empire. Building on the previous owner's original recipes, the food that comes out of the small kitchen is fresh, delicious, and the portions are more than ample.

Dishes that I must have when I dine there include the fantastic Oysters Rockefeller, Jalapeno Shrimp Enchiladas, their signature seafood laden Cioppino, the Seafood Molcajete and the Basil Lobster Enchiladas. Their fresh fish entrees are also terrific as are their Carne Asada and grilled or fried Fish Tacos. The menu really excites me and I congratulate this small family restaurant being named to this year's Top 25 Restaurants in Riverside Dining Guide.

Las Campañas at the Mission Inn

(951) 784-0300

3649 Mission Inn Avenue

Type of Cuisine: Mexican

Price Range: \$\$

Older Child Friendly • Full Bar

Las Campañas Mexican Restaurant, located in the lush green and colorful flower gardens just outside the Presidential Lounge and the front entrance of the Mission Inn Hotel & Spa, is a semi-upscale Mexican restaurant in a peaceful and tropical setting. Las Campañas serves some delicious classic and original Mexican dishes that are outstanding. The food is very tasty and the presentations are beautiful.

Dishes I really like include the boldly flavored Steak Adobado, the robust flavored Chile Verde, the tender and highly seasoned Carnitas, the Snapper Veracruzana and the Chicken Vallarta with a zesty Apricot Chipotle sauce. The New York Steak with Mole Poblano and the Salmon Naranja seared salmon with an orange-tequila reduction sauce should also be considered. Don't forget to try one of their signature (and huge) Margaritas. As with all of the other restaurants at the "Inn," allow time after dinner to walk around, discover and enjoy the many sights and "hidden treasures" that the Mission Inn offers within the historic grounds.

Mario's Place

(951) 684-7755

3646 Mission Inn Avenue

Type of Cuisine: Northern Contemporary Italian

Price Range: Lunch \$\$ • Dinner \$\$-\$\$\$ • Full Bar

Live Jazz every Friday & Saturday night 10 p.m. to 1 a.m.

Mario's Place is one of the oldest fine dining Italian restaurants in Riverside serving some of the best and most creative Italian dishes in Southern California. This "hip," upscale and classy restaurant is located directly across from the Mission Inn Hotel & Spa and serves an array of delicious Northern Italian dishes with touches of southern France and California thrown in. The restaurant has won many prestigious awards for its extraordinary food and first class service thanks to Owner/Chef Leone Palagi and his brothers who have kept Mario's Place in the forefront of fine dining here in Riverside for more than 26 years.

Some of the many dishes worth trying include the Risotto di Agrumi, the popular Pan-Roasted Veal Chops, the delicious Grilled Prime Angus New York Steak with 15-year-old Balsamic and horseradish infused oil, and the Scottish Salmon cooked in parchment with citrus & ginger. Better yet, why not choose Chef Leone's wonderful Prix Fixe dinners with wine pairings? Whether you want to impress or just enjoy a memorable meal, Mario's Place is truly a special culinary dining experience.

Mission Inn Restaurant

(951) 341-6719

3649 Mission Inn Avenue

Sunday Brunch - 9:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Child friendly • Full bar

The Mission Inn Hotel & Spa has a long and colorful 104-year history; however, over the past few years, many changes have taken place and a new chapter has been added to this crown jewel resort of the Inland Empire. For starters, the dining room at the Mission Inn Restaurant has slowly been refurbished with plush new tables and chairs, newly painted murals on the walls and on the ceiling, new plates and silverware in the dinning room, and now, a stunning new display kitchen where all of the magnificent food is prepared fresh for all to see. The sight of chefs busily preparing and cooking behind the beautiful rustic colored marbled counter, the shining copper walls, and a large rotisserie dancing through the air is truly poetry in motion.

The large dining room is elegant and inviting, yet casual; and the adjacent Spanish patio with colorful plants, lush greenery, and beautiful architecture surrounding it is the ultimate place to relax and rid yourself of stress.

The addition of Executive Chef Alfredo Gutierrez and Food & Beverage Director Carlos Acosta, (both coming from the Disneyland Resort), have added more flair and excitement to the menu. The Braised Short Ribs, Rotisserie Chicken, Jumbo Shrimp Provencal and the magnificent Prime Rib are just a few of their great new items; however, their Blue Bayou (restaurant in Disneyland) inspired Battered Fried Monte Cristo Sandwich is my absolute favorite. This "king of sandwiches" is offered only at lunch time, but if I were you, I would call ahead and ask if the chef or manager would please make a Monte Cristo sandwich for you for dinner. Pleading, putting guilt on him and just plain crying will surely help your cause. You must try this sandwich before you die and go to culinary heaven!

Monark Asian Bistro

(951) 683-1678

5225 Canyon Crest Drive

Price Range: \$-\$\$

Child Friendly

Beer & Wine Only

For more than 24 years, the Little Emperor Restaurant in the Canyon Crest Towne Centre, a few doors down from the Ralph's Market, has been serving up some really good Thai and Chinese dishes. Now that the Little Emperor has grown up, this charming restaurant has been renamed the Monark Asian Bistro. In addition to a new name, the interior has been completely refurbished and is absolutely stunning with soft relaxing Thai music that resonates while you dine in splendor.

Since the Monark is under the same ownership, you can count on friendly service and great food. Many of the original items have remained on the menu, but there are some terrific new items that I suggest you try. These items include the delicious Monark Steak with a tasty lemon grass garlic sauce, fresh Miso Salmon, Chinese Chicken Salad and the Talay Quartet with sautéed scallops, fish, shrimp, calamari, onions and basil in a zesty Thai chili sauce. There are also many vegetarian dishes available. I am still amazed at the transformation of this restaurant and I know you will be too!

Olio Steak & Seafood Ristorante

(951) 786-7147

3400 Market Street • The Marriott Hotel

Type of Cuisine: American/Continental

Price Range: \$-\$\$

Child Friendly

Full Bar

Martini's Lounge features over 200 Martinis as well as some appetizers, salads and sandwiches.

Olio's at the Marriot Hotel in downtown Riverside is a nice casual restaurant that features some outstanding Italian, Steak and Seafood entrees that are unique and delicious. In addition to tasty food, Martini's Lounge offers a unique collection of Vodka infused drinks with fresh fruit, vegetables, spices and herbs along with a wide array of unique Martini's that are fun and oh so good.

From the dinner menu, I enjoy their grilled Porcini Filet Mignon Steak, the Chicken Picatta, the Salmon Florentine, the delicious Parmesan Crusted Swordfish and the Pescatore Risotto, while the Crab Cake Sandwich with Fontina cheese, Pear & Gorgonzola Pizza, Salmon Lasagna, Chicken Saltimbocca and the Porcini Hanger Steak make for terrific lunch items. Executive Chef Luis Martinez is the man behind all of these great dishes and deserves a lot of credit for making hotel dining usually reserved to the hotel guests both fun and exciting for the locals to experience.

Ooka Japanese Sushi

& Hibachi Restaurant

(951) 779-0099

3525 Riverside Plaza Drive

Type of Cuisine: Japanese/Sushi

Price Range: Lunch \$-\$\$ • Dinner \$\$-\$\$\$

Older Child Friendly

Full Bar

In Japanese, Ooka means "Cherry Blossom." To those living in Riverside, Ooka means an exciting Japanese restaurant featuring traditional as well as creative signature sushi rolls, grilled chicken, seafood items, tempting Tempura and Teriyaki dishes, and just about any other favorite Japanese dishes you desire. Ooka is located in the "new" Riverside Plaza and although it is new, it looks like a real "winner." Some of the great sushi items you can expect to find are the Signature Ooka Shrimp Tempura Roll with Eel and Avocado, the Lobster Tempura Roll with Smoked Salmon and Avocado, the terrific Hot Fancy Roll with seared pepper salmon and spicy tuna, and the unique Purple Roll covered with grilled marinated eggplant. The Teriyaki, Udon and Grilled dishes are also very good but the Sushi appears to be the "real star" of Ooka's.



Peking Chinese Restaurant

(951) 687-4822

11170 Magnolia Avenue

Type of Cuisine: Chinese

Price Range: \$-\$\$

Child Friendly

Beer & Wine

Peking Chinese Restaurant is a small Chinese restaurant tucked away in a shopping center that serves some of the best Chinese food in Riverside. The dining room features large booths and small hanging Chinese lanterns while a huge wooden relief mural adorns the walls. Two well-kept fish tanks set the mood and the smell of ginger, garlic and other aromatic ingredients fills the air. Some of the many Chinese dishes I always order include the popular Three Flavor Hot Noodle Soup with hand made noodles, the Fried Fish with Hot Garlic Sauce, the plump and crispy Orange Shrimp, and the classic Twice Cooked Pork. The portions are large, the prices are fair and the food is delicious. If you are looking for both authentic and tasty Chinese food, you must visit the Peking Chinese Restaurant.

Pho Express

(951) 784-0171

1766 University Avenue

Type of food: Vietnamese

Prices: \$-\$\$

Child friendly

Beer & Wine

Pho Express is a vibrant Vietnamese restaurant that serves more than 225 dishes that are rich in both Vietnamese culture and flavors. The prices are outstanding, the servers are friendly and knowledgeable, and the food is fresh and delicious. The clean and “hip” interior, nice food presentations and their outstanding Vietnamese food makes Pho Express one of my top picks in this year’s Riverside restaurant guide.

Dishes that really “wowed” me were their popular Pho Soup; the stir fried filet mignon with butter, bell peppers & onions; the spicy Thai influenced Calamari with ginger lemon grass sauce; and, the Charbroiled Pork Sandwich. If you have never had the experience of partaking in Vietnamese food, Pho Express is a wonderful restaurant to start your culinary journey through Vietnamese cuisine.



Raxx Barbecue & Brewing Co.

(951) 784-2739

3397 Mission Inn Avenue

Type of Cuisine: American/Barbecue

Price Range: \$-\$\$

Child Friendly

Full Bar

Raxx Barbecue & Brewing Co. continues to serve some of the best smoked ribs and meats in the Inland Empire. The large stainless steel smoker sitting proudly in the front of the restaurant uses hickory, apple, and oak wood to slow smoke their meaty ribs, brisket, chicken, and pork. They also have a large bar and lounge area along with stainless steel brewing tanks that brew many of the beers offered. The large dining room walls are covered with nostalgic signs, posters, and pictures of food items and blues musicians that help get you into the BBQ mood.

Some of the impressive items on the menu that I like are the Sampler Appetizer Platter, the Pulled Pork Sandwich, Tri Tip Salad, and the massive Good Times Platter with choices of ribs, brisket, chicken, smoked Bacon Wrapped Shrimp with Jalapenos or pulled pork. Raxx Barbecue & Brewing Co. can also cater your next party at home, in your office, or on-site in their large patio area.

Restaurant Omakase

(951) 788-8820

3720 Mission Inn Avenue

Type of Cuisine: French/Japanese

Price Range: Lunch \$-\$\$ • Dinner \$\$-\$\$\$

Beer and Wine

Restaurant Omakase in downtown Riverside remains one of the most sophisticated and exciting restaurants in our city. This quaint restaurant offers some creative and visually stunning dishes and it must be experienced if you are looking for a truly memorable meal. The lemon and lime colored walls and candlelit mahogany tables set the tone for the magnificent Japanese French infused dishes that owner chef Brein Clements and his very talented kitchen staff create using fresh and organic ingredients grown locally.

The menu changes monthly and features a myriad of delicious appetizers, entrees, and desserts, each designed to impress and dazzle all of your senses. For those who really appreciate fine food, the chef’s tasting menu features seasonal and spontaneous selections paired with wines. Choose from 5, 8 and 10 course food and wine tasting pairings. Forget the restaurants in Napa Valley, Riverside has Restaurant Omakase.



The Royal Falconer

(951) 684-4281

4281 Main Street

Type of Cuisine: British

Price Range: Lunch \$ • Dinner \$-\$\$

Older Child Friendly

Full Bar

The Royal Falconer is an authentic English pub featuring a nice variety of British foods in a lively pub environment. The long and narrow restaurant/pub is decked out with wooden floors and walls where European style paintings hang and beer signs line the walls. A dartboard is also available for those interested in a friendly game of darts. The large bar has all of your favorite spirits and many beers on tap as well as ciders. The menu is varied but specializes in English fare such as Bangers and Mash, Shepherd’s Pie, Cornish Pasty and Scotch Eggs (hard boiled eggs wrapped in sausage and fried). These items are all good; however the crisp Lavosh cracker bread covered with jack cheese and choice of toppings, the spicy and very tasty Chicken Curry, and the Royal Tips are my favorites. Come hungry and be prepared for a loud, but fun dining (and drinking) experience.

Café Sevilla

(951) 778-0611

3252 Mission Inn Avenue

Type of Cuisine: Spanish/Tapas

Price Range: Tapas \$-\$\$\$ • Dinner \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$

Tango Dinner Show - Friday Nights

Flamenco Dinner Show - Saturday Nights

Older Child Friendly

Full Bar • Catering

Sevilla is a unique restaurant serving a stimulating array of delicious dishes from Spain. Set in an elegant yet casual atmosphere with sultry sounds of Flamenco music filtering throughout the dining room, Sevilla is a special dining destination restaurant that should be experienced by all those who like culinary adventure at its finest. In addition to some terrific hot and cold Tapas (Spanish appetizer plates), their menu features an outstanding array of Spanish dishes that you will love, such as the house special Paella Valenciana, the Castillian Style Fillet Medallions, the pan-seared Australian Striped Bass, and baked Rabbit Basque Style with fresh rosemary and thyme.

From the Tapas menu, the Shrimp Azafran, the Empanada Barcelona, the Seafood Crepe, and the Shrimp Croquettes are excellent. Sevilla also offers a first class Sunday brunch complete with a sumptuous array of salads, specialty Spanish hot entrees, carving-and omelet-making stations, traditional breakfast items and some terrific desserts including a hot chocolate fountain to dip your favorite fruits, marshmallows and other sweet items in. Dining at Sevilla is a real treat and should not be overlooked.

Simple Simon's Bakery & Cafe

(951) 369-6030

3639 Main Street

Type of Cuisine: American Sandwiches,

Salads & Baked Goods

Price Range: \$ • Cash & Check only

Child Friendly

Beer & Wine

Simple Simon's continues to be one of Riverside's top bakeries & cafés for good reason; the freshly baked breads and sandwiches, salads and desserts are outstanding. Some of their delicious breakfast items include the Winter Omelet with gorgonzola cheese, onions, pecans and apples, and their Homemade Granola. The sandwiches I recommend are the Chicken Apple Sausage on Focaccia with Gouda cheese, the Roast Lamb with grilled eggplant, feta cheese and tomato fennel olive sauce, and their vegetarian Mediterranean Melt. Make sure you save room for one of their decadent desserts. Whether you dine indoors or in their spacious outdoor patio area across from the Mission Inn, you will thoroughly enjoy this marvelous bakery café.

Trilussa Ristorante

(951) 683-3494

Type of Cuisine: Italian

Price Range: Lunch: \$-\$\$ • Dinner: \$\$-\$\$\$\$

Full Bar

Trilussa Ristorante is a large casual upscale Italian restaurant that offers traditional Italian cuisine and is located in an old bank building near City Hall. The main dining room is spacious and elegant and the converted bank vault is now a classy wine vault with a seating area for small banquets or parties. There is also a large patio where you can relax and dine outdoors. The entrees that I have enjoyed immensely are the Farfalle Al Salmone, Lamb Shank on Porcini Risotto, the tangy Pork Chop marinated in Balsamic vinegar and the tasty Petto di Pollo Caprese. The food is both fresh and full of flavor while the prices are fair.

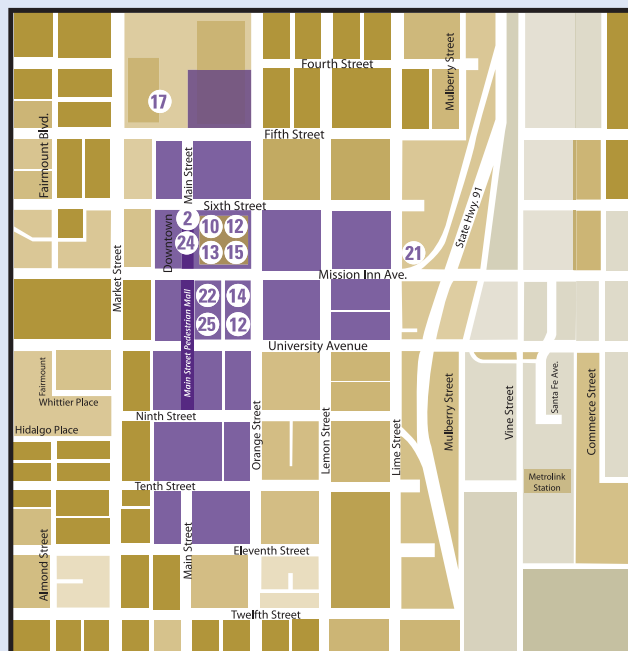


Finding Riverside's Top 25 Restaurants 2008

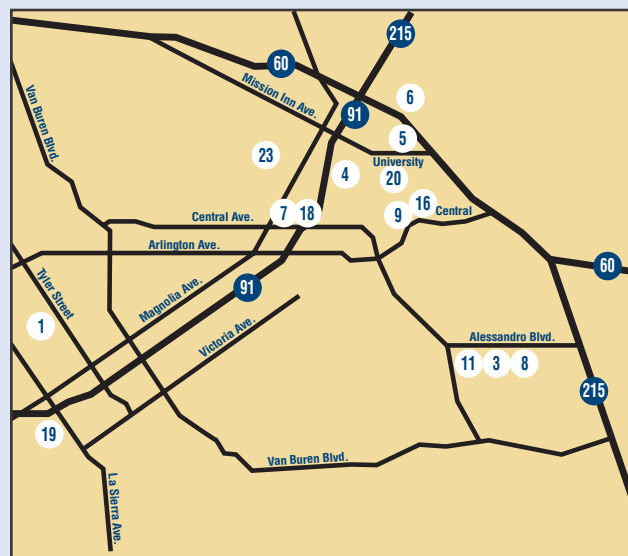
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Downtown Area Restaurants



Riverside Area Restaurants





About Allan Borgen

Allan Borgen has been a restaurant critic for more the 20 years. He has seven years experience working in various restaurants in Los Angeles and has taken chef's training and restaurant management classes.

For the past 19 years, Allan has produced and hosted the "Let's Dine Out Show." He is also the Restaurant Critic for the *Inland Valley Daily Bulletin* and the *San Bernardino Sun* newspapers and is a member of the Southern California Restaurant Writers Association.

Listen to Allan every Saturday afternoon from 3 pm to 6 pm on the *Let's Dine Out Food Show* on talk radio KTIE 590 am.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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